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## BOOK REVIEWS



IN CHARGE OF

M. E. CAMERON

**STUDIES IN INVALID OCCUPATION, A MANUAL FOR NURSES AND ATTENDANTS.** By Susan E. Tracy. Price, \$1.50. Whitcomb & Barrows, Boston.

The nurse who is thoroughly trained in the care of the sick, who knows the significance of each breath her patient draws; who keeps her patients in apple-pie order, as to person, dietary, housing; who notes accurately and reports intelligently, has no doubt grounds for asserting that she knows something of nursing. She will not, however, have appreciated the real gist of her training if she arrives at the point where she thinks she "knows it all." The physical side of nursing is, it seems, tremendously dependent on the psychological side and the slackness which is universally recognized as degenerative in the normal body becomes even more powerfully a degenerating agency in the body which has been weakened by pain and suffering. In recognition of this Miss Tracy has written her book. She makes an earnest plea for more teaching for nurses along the lines of occupation studies, seeing as definite a place for this branch of training as the high schools and colleges give to manual training. In hospitals for the insane, occupation is taught by persons trained for teaching but entirely lacking in knowledge of the limitations imposed by disease upon the patients. Miss Tracy sees a solution of the difficulty by training the nurse so that she may become also the teacher; to do this there need be no feeling that the nurse has been relegated to a sphere to which she does not belong, since, more and more, doctors are making use of methods of suggestion or psychotherapy in their treatment of disease. She suggests that when the time comes when nurses who have been doing private duty nursing for a term of years begin to feel the need of relaxation from the strain of nursing and are ready for a change of occupation, they take a course in this work and perhaps follow it by teaching what they have learned.

"The field," says Miss Tracy, "is well opened for this work; teachers will surely be in demand. They must possess resourcefulness, unfailing patience, quick perception of capacities and limitations, an enthusiasm which can anticipate for the patient the attractiveness of

the finished product, and the insight which substitutes a new piece of work or a new phase of the old before the patient is conscious of weariness or distaste. Such teachers exist, and may be developed, although they are none too frequently met. They should receive quick recognition and careful training." And again: "The main trouble with the pupil nurse lies in her failure to make strong connections between occupation and nursing. She feels that the essential experience lies in witnessing and assisting at unusual and striking surgical operations, but out in the world of private work she will get little of this; what she will get, will be the long twenty-four hour day, the seven day week, the thirty day month, and three hundred and sixty-five day year, with all the monotony of diminished powers. Whatever renders these long stretches fertile, and hangs even the smallest fruit on the weak branches of the tree of life, will never be a matter of regret."

The book takes up various occupations suitable to different kinds of invalids and such others as may have become deficient through the result of accident or deformity—or the blind. The materials necessary vary of course with the products evolved. For a large institution there would be required a certain amount of equipment, but for a single case, observation, ingenuity, and whatever trifles may present themselves most readily seem to be all that are needed.

It is to be hoped that Miss Tracy's suggestion of making the study of invalid occupation a part of the training of the pupil nurse may be taken up by those who have to do with the arrangement of the curriculum of nurse training schools. The superintendents will groan and wonder where the time is to be found for the new branch, but this is one of the changes that seems to have come to stay.

And even if, for the present, it may find the greater part of its adherents among the older graduate nurses, the time is not far distant when doctors will require more of this sort of thing from nurses, and nurses will demand more of this sort of training.

Apart from its teaching the book furnishes most agreeable reading, Miss Tracy having a keen sense of humor, a large fund of sympathy for the shut-ins, and a realizing sense of the disadvantages that this class labors under.

The concluding chapter is written by Dr. E. Stanley Abbot, of MacLean Hospital, Waverly, Mass., and gives some results from following in these lines, in cases of mental deficiency and in the insane; among this class the work has been more systematically used and has more to show in the way of results.